

Additional Stand Alone Lesson Plans

Mapping and the Anza Trail

This program is designed as an in-class exercise conducted by the teacher.
Use a copy of the Map from the journal section of the Anza Trail curriculum

Background

Juan Bautista de Anza wanted to bring settlers from Mexico to San Francisco. In 1774, he led a group of soldiers from what is now northern Mexico, through Arizona, and across California to the Bay Area - achieving the first overland trip from Mexico to Alta California. Without a map, road, or directions, he navigated his troops across the California desert, through a mountain range, and up the California coast to prove that it could be done. This opened the way for a group of nearly 300 men, women and children to migrate almost 2,000 miles from Mexico to their new homes in San Francisco in 1776.

Map Review

Students should take a minute or two to examine the map of the "Anza Trail". When they have had enough time to study it, they should identify and mark:

- a.) The state of California
- b.) The state of Arizona
- c.) The Pacific Ocean
- d.) The Mexican state of Baja California
- e.) The Mexican state of Sonora
- f.) Where they live with a star

After reviewing the map, either orally or as a journal exercise, ask them to explain:
What natural features did the Anza expedition follow when crossing the deserts of Arizona?
Why do you think they chose to follow them?

What natural feature did the Anza Expedition try to avoid by moving south into Baja California?

Why would they want to avoid this?

The Native American villages were normally near a river or by the ocean. Why would they want to live there?

Using the compass in the upper right hand quarter of the map, what general direction did the expedition move in? Do you think the weather changed as they moved in this direction?

Using a ruler, try to measure the length of the trail from the Mexico/Arizona border to San Francisco. In miles, how long was this portion of the expedition?

Background

Crossing the California desert was the most difficult portion of the entire Anza Expedition. With 300 people and almost 1000 animals, there just was not sufficient water for the three day trip to cross the desert once they the Colorado River. The Yuma (Quechan) people near the river had helped feed and take care of the expedition before they attempted the desert crossing.

Discussion Questions

Anza knew from his 1774 crossing that there were a few springs in the desert between the Colorado River and the San Gabriel Mission. The springs slowly refilled throughout the day but there was not enough water for all of the people and animals. If you were Anza, how would you have dealt with getting the expedition across the desert?

Answer - Anza divided the expedition into three groups of people and one group of animals for a total of four groups. By each group leaving a day apart, there was enough time for the springs to refill and provide enough water to keep everyone going.

The Anza Expedition tried to pack all the food that they would need for their six-month trip from near the Mexican border to San Francisco. But often, supplies ran very short. As they traveled through California, they moved through the southeastern desert, across the mountains, along rivers and to the shores. With no stores along the way, where would you get more supplies from to feed the hundreds of people on the expedition?

Answer - Anza depended on trading with the Native Americans his expedition met along the way. Along the Colorado River, the Quechan people provided the expedition with fish and melons. Along the Pacific Coast, the Chumash people traded with their fish and baskets with the Anza expedition for beads and ribbons. The four missions that the expedition passed also provided additional food for the settlers, although the missions struggled to meet the needs of 300 people.

Alternative Internet based exercise:

Go to the Web De Anza Internet site at <http://anza.uoregon.edu/atlas/relief/sf.htm> - click on the map segment nearest to your home. First, click on the historic trail link. Next, click on the historic/modern roads link and compare the two images.

What modern road follows the historic Anza Trail?

Look at the shading on the map that indicates where the mountains are.

Does the expedition route go over or around mountains? If you were leading the expedition, would you go over mountains or around them? Why?

Now, click on the tab with Historic/Major Modern/Streams. Are there major fresh water sources near your home? Where do you think the Anza expedition got their water?

Follow the links to the Atlas to explore other map segments along the Anza Trail.

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Personal Timeline

Students will create an in-class timeline that shows their personal history. They will be able to compare their own timelines to one created in class during a ranger visit that will demonstrates the Spanish exploration in California and on the North American Continent. Students will become familiar with the idea of using a timeline.

Background Information

People have been living in California for a long time. A very long time. Immigrants arrived in North America over 10,000 years ago during the last Ice Age by crossing over the Bering Straits. When Columbus arrived in North America in 1492, American Indians had been on the continent for over 600 generations. It would be another three centuries - 15 generations - before the Anza expedition made it to the shore of California. Yet, when Anza was recruiting families to come to California with him, he was meeting farmers, soldiers, and merchants who had been living and working in Mexico for hundreds of years. Mexico was more their home than Spain - a place that virtually none of them had ever seen.

It's been 228 years since the settlers from northern Mexico came up to live in San Francisco. A lot has changed since they arrived. Over 35 million people now live in California. The landscape is completely changed with the introduction of exotic plants and animals and the arrival of the car.

A Personal Timeline

Students will need a blank sheet of paper. Turn the paper on its side. With a ruler, draw a line from one side to the other. On the left side, put a dot on the line. Underneath it, write the year you were born. Over it, write "My birthday" and draw a little birthday cake. On the right side of the line, put a dot on the line. Underneath, write today's date. Over it write "today". Between the two dots, pick important dates that have happened in you life. For example, put a dot down for the year your brother/sister was born, or the year you started first grade, or the year you moved to your new house. Try to come up with at least six different dates. If you like, draw a small picture over each important date to represent what happened that day.

When you are done, you have created a timeline of your life. You can repeat the exercise using the history of California, Mexico, and Arizona as well.

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A Friendly Letter

This program is designed as an in-class history and language program stressing reading and journal writing. The student will have the opportunity to learn about California's Spanish colonial history and indigenous populations through journal and letter writing.

Background Information - Read in Class by Teacher or Students

1776 was an exciting year in California. Most Americans think of it as the year when the United States declared its independence from England. But few people know that there were actually important events taking place on the West Coast. A year earlier, a group of families had left their homes to take an incredible trip. They were planning on going nearly two thousand miles by horse and foot to California after making the long trek up from Mexico. They hoped to create a fort, a mission, and a city in San Francisco that would protect the northern boundary of the Spanish empire. For hundreds of years, Spain had thought of this area, known as Alta California, as part of their realm, although no Spanish had ever lived in the San Francisco area. For a number of years, sailors from Russia and England had been exploring the California coast as well, hoping to build their own cities and settlements. With all of these groups wanting to live in California, the Spanish King thought it was time to bring as many people as possible to California to build settlements.

With all of this planning to create cities, no one had given much thought to the people that had actually been living in these areas. Native Americans, like the Ohlone in San Francisco and the Miwok in the East Bay, had fished, hunted, and thrived throughout the area. They sailed the waters on boats made of reeds, used fire to burn off certain plants so that others would grow, and traded food, baskets, and tools with other tribes from hundreds of miles away. Imagine their surprise at seeing nearly 300 settlers from Mexico. The Indians had never seen horses or the other livestock. The metal tools, the guns, and the colorful clothes that the settlers brought seemed to be from another world.

To the settlers, life in San Francisco was like being on a distant planet. Most of the settlers had been farmers in the dry deserts of northern Mexico. As they came north, all of the animals and plants that they knew changed. The Indians that they lived with in Mexico were thousands of miles away - they were meeting other Native Americans who dressed differently, spoke another language, and lived very different lifestyles. The Mexican settlers were hoping for a new and better life in an area where farming would be easier. Many also hoped that one day they would be able to have some land of their own where they could farm and raise their families. Imagine what they would have felt when they saw the Ohlone people living and working in the land that they hoped to settle.

So, 1776 was a very exciting time for California, both for the Spanish who had just arrived

and for the Indians that had called San Francisco their home for centuries.

Exercise - Journal Writing

For many years, people have used journals or diaries to record or help them remember things that have happened in their lives. During the Anza expedition to California, both the commander Juan Bautista de Anza and the trip's priest Father Pedro Font kept a daily journal of events. Here is an example of a journal that might have been written by a 10-year-old boy on the Anza expedition.

It's 1775 and King of Spain wants many Spanish people to move up to the strange new lands called Alta California where Native Americans have lived for thousands of years. The King is afraid that some other countries may take the land away from us if no Spanish people are living there. If Spanish people are living there, other countries will know that the land belongs to the King.

I have lived in the northern part of New Spain all my life and I'm not sure if I want to move. The King has sent his representative to ask us to move. So we are going on a long trip by land to Alta California. Our leader on this trip will be Captain Juan Bautista de Anza. He is well known and has been to Alta California before. The trip will not be easy, but Captain Anza will see us through I'm sure.

I will miss seeing my Abuela Maria and all of my cousins who cannot make the trip. I may never see them again. It will take us six months to reach San Francisco and it is unlikely that I will be able to travel this great distance again. Since the mule and horse are carrying all of our supplies, I was not able to bring my toys - only clothes. I don't think I want to go but my father tells me that we are going to a land with lots of land, plenty of rain, and many animals we can hunt.

Now, write a journal entry of your own. Make believe you are a boy or girl who is about to go on a trip and have to leave your home for a new place thousands of miles away. What things will you miss about your home? What small item can you bring to help you remember your family and friends?

Exercise - Writing a Friendly Letter

In 1776, there was no such thing as e-mail or a telephone. In order to talk to friends far away, people wrote letters. Sometimes they would take months to get to the other person.

Imagine that you are a member of the Anza expedition. Write a letter to a friend or a member of your family, telling them about what it is like to live in this new and different place. Tell them about what your chores might be, what San Francisco looked like in 1776, or your reactions to the Native Americans.

Or, imagine that you are an Ohlone Indian living near the site of the new Spanish Presidio in